6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year. In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a